

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-16 without prejudice and add claims 17-34 as follows:

1.-16. (Canceled)

17. (New) A tissue graft composition comprising gelled liver basement membrane tissue of a warm-blooded vertebrate, added nutrients, and added cells wherein the gelled liver basement membrane tissue is seeded with the cells prior to implantation of the graft composition into the warm-blooded vertebrate.

18. (New) The tissue graft composition of claim 17 wherein the gelled liver basement membrane is prepared by adjusting the pH of a solution of fluidized liver basement membrane tissue and added nutrients to about 6.0 to about 7.4.

19. (New) The tissue graft composition of claim 17 wherein the composition is useful as a non-immunogenic tissue graft composition capable of inducing endogenous tissue growth when implanted into the warm-blooded vertebrate.

20. (New) A composition for supporting the growth of a cell population in vitro, the composition comprising gelled liver basement membrane tissue of a warm-blooded vertebrate and added nutrients to support the growth of the cell population.

21. (New) The composition of claim 20 wherein the gelled liver basement membrane is prepared by adjusting the pH of a solution of fluidized liver basement membrane tissue and added nutrients to about 6.0 to about 7.4.

22. (New) A composition for supporting the growth of a cell population, the composition comprising culture-ware coated with a matrix comprising gelled liver basement membrane tissue and added nutrients.

23. (New) The composition of claim 22 wherein the gelled liver basement membrane tissue is gelled by adjusting the pH of a solution of fluidized liver basement membrane tissue and added nutrients to about 6.0 to about 7.4.

24. (New) A method for inducing the formation of endogenous tissue at a site in need of endogenous tissue growth in a warm-blooded vertebrate, the method comprising the step of implanting a graft composition comprising gelled liver basement membrane tissue of a warm-blooded vertebrate at the site in need of endogenous tissue growth in an amount effective to induce endogenous tissue growth.

25. (New) The method of claim 24 wherein the graft composition is implanted surgically.

26. (New) The method of claim 24 wherein the gelled liver basement membrane tissue is seeded with exogenous cells prior to implantation of the graft composition into the warm-blooded vertebrate.

27. (New) The method of claim 24 further comprising the steps of preparing a solution of fluidized liver basement membrane tissue and added nutrients and gelling the solution by adjusting the pH of the solution to about 6.0 to about 7.4.

28. (New) A method for preparing a tissue graft composition from warm-blooded vertebrate liver tissue having both cellular and extracellular components, the method comprising the steps of:

treating the liver tissue with a cell dissociation solution for a period of time sufficient to release the cellular components of the liver tissue from the extracellular components without substantial disruption of the extracellular components;

separating the cellular components from the extracellular components;

digesting the extracellular components and adding nutrients to form a solution of fluidized liver basement membrane tissue; and

gelling the solution of fluidized liver basement membrane tissue to form a solid or a semi-solid matrix.

29. (New) The method of claim 28 wherein the cell dissociation solution comprises a chaotropic agent.

30. (New) The method of claim 28 wherein the cell dissociation solution comprises a protease.

31. (New) The method of claim 28 wherein the cell dissociation solution comprises EDTA and trypsin.

32. (New) The method of claim 28 wherein the liver tissue is sliced into sheets or strips of liver tissue before the liver tissue is treated with the dissociation solution.

33. (New) The method of claim 32 where the liver tissue is sliced into sheets or strips having a thickness of up to about 500 μ .

34. (New) The method of claim 28 wherein the fluidized solution is gelled by adjusting the pH of the solution to about 6.0 to about 7.4.